

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

September 25, 2007
Aldermen Garrity, O'Neil,
Osborne, Gatsas, Duval

6:00 PM
Aldermanic Chambers
City Hall (3rd Floor)

Chairman Garrity called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Garrity, O'Neil, Osborne, Gatsas, Duval

3. Amending resolution and budget authorization for the FY2007 CIP 210007 HIV Counseling & Testing in the amount of \$25,000.

On motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Duval, it was voted to recommend approval of the resolution and budget authorization as presented.

4. Amending resolution and budget authorization for the 2008 CIP 213908 Manchester Multi-Lingual Asthma Education and Outreach Program in the amount of \$27,666.

On motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Osborne, it was voted to recommend approval of the resolution and budget authorization as presented.

5. Amending resolution and budget authorization for the FY2008 CIP 411708 Firesafe Intervention Program in the amount of \$10,000.

On motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Duval, it was voted to recommend approval of the resolution and budget authorization as presented.

6. Amending resolution and budget authorization for the FY2008 CIP 511808 Recreational Improvements Fund Project in the amount of \$20,000.

On motion of Alderman Duval, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil, it was voted to recommend approval of the resolution and budget authorization as presented.

7. CIP Budget Authorizations:

613105	"Jac Pac" Acquisition Project – Revision #1
511307	JFK Coliseum Rehabilitation – Revision #2
711008	Design & Construction of Incinerator Upgrade at WWTF
711108	Design of Aeration Upgrade at WWTF
711208	Design of Grit Chamber Upgrade at WWTF
711308	Sewer/Pump Station of Infrastructure Repair

Alderman O'Neil moved to approve the authorizations. Alderman Osborne duly seconded the motion.

Alderman O'Neil asked about the Sewer/Pump Station Infrastructure Repair, asking if that was as emergencies come up such as collapsing sewers, is that where that fund would be used.

Mr. McNeill responded that was correct, it's for emergency use but for the future years we are actually budgeting \$1.5 million and we are going to establish a preventive maintenance program and try to get ahead of it.

Alderman Gatsas questioned the "Jac Pac" item, stating that Mr. MacKenzie informed him that the balance in that account is \$67,000; and I don't think that's enough to carry the project until the date of 2008.

Chairman Garrity noted it was for security and things of that nature.

Alderman Gatsas stated well I would assume if we have already spent \$333,000 of \$400,000, there is going to be a deficit and where is the money going to come from?

Mr. MacKenzie stated I think it would be useful at some point if the Board got a detailed cash flow analysis from the MHRA. Jay is the prime contact. As I was mentioning to Alderman Gatsas, the MHRA did receive funds from two items.

One is a sale of equipment in the freezer walkers. I think that was about \$50,000. And they received quite a bit of money on parking leases from the CMC, but that money didn't funnel back through the City so I don't know what those exact numbers are.

Chairman Garrity stated the remaining \$67,000 does not include the parking fees from CMC or the sale of equipment.

Mr. MacKenzie stated that is correct.

Alderman Gatsas moved to table this item until the Committee receives the information from MHRA to tell us exactly where the money is and how much money we have. Alderman Osborne seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Chairman Garrity requested the Clerk contact Jay Minkarah to advise of the information needed by the Committee.

Deputy City Clerk Johnson noted there was a main motion on the floor regarding the balance of the items.

Alderman O'Neil clarified his motion was now to approve all remaining budget authorizations presented. Alderman Osborne duly seconded. The motion carried.

8. Communication from Robert MacKenzie, Director of Planning and Community Development, recommending that \$300,000 of additional debt service of Affordable Housing Trust Funds be provided for the CIP 610106 Permanent Supportive Housing Helping Hands project.

On motion of Alderman Osborne, duly seconded by Alderman Duval, it was voted to table this item pending review of the project with CIP staff and the Ward Alderman.

9. Communication from Chief Jaskolka regarding their number one priority of the replacement of the Police Department's portable radios.

Alderman O'Neil moved for discussion. Alderman Osborne seconded the motion.

Alderman O'Neil stated that radios have been identified by the department as the number one issue, asking Mr. MacKenzie if his staff had looked at all if they wanted to purchase some radios how we could do that. I understand it is an immediate need it's not a need that can necessarily wait until the next budget.

Deputy Chief Simmons stated I think it is an immediate need in that we need to identify and start a scheduling program. We were asking originally for 50 radios each year and the start of a scheduling program. If the funding wasn't available for that certainly we would take what we could get to stretch us through this fiscal year. However, we definitely have identified that we need to start a replacement program now. Primarily the reason for that is because the radio we now have they do not manufacture any longer so the parts are becoming difficult to obtain, we have a new radio actually that the manufacturer has identified for us to utilize and that's the primary reason.

Alderman O'Neil stated so putting this off for another year doesn't help the cause; it only makes it worse.

Deputy Chief Simmons stated I would say it makes it worse.

Alderman O'Neil stated am I correct that they are about \$3,500 a piece?

Deputy Chief Simmons stated yes, that is the radio, the battery, the charger, the additional battery, the caller mike, that's soup to nuts.

Chairman Garrity asked if it covered installation.

Deputy Chief Simmons state yes, installation, the software, the privacy software. There are a number of things that have to go into the radio that the manufacturer puts in as well.

Alderman O'Neil stated these are all portables, correct?

Deputy Chief Simmons stated yes they are handheld. Each car radio right now is working fine. We have no desire to replace those at this point.

Alderman O'Neil asked Mr. MacKenzie if they had looked at it at all.

Mr. MacKenzie replied we have a little bit. We did have a meeting with the Police Department and the Mayor's office and kind of went over the needs and potential funding sources. \$175,000 in cash for the next few years is going to be difficult to achieve. We did talk about some options such as the MER account, but I don't see we are going to get \$175,000 right off the bat.

Alderman O'Neil asked if there was some number less than that. I'm guessing that anything moving forward is a positive step.

Deputy Chief Simmons replied absolutely.

Alderman O'Neil asked if Mr. MacKenzie could take a look if there were some other funding sources, and I'm guessing that even though we may get 15 years out of these, it's not a bondable item.

Mr. MacKenzie responded I don't believe this would be a bondable item, this type of equipment and the amount of money it's for, no.

Alderman O'Neil asked Mr. Sheppard if the MER had a balance in it. We forever can use new police cruisers. I hear rattling up and down the street regularly - front line. So if we have any money available can you provide that to the Committee?

Alderman O'Neil stated two smaller scale items that I think we should address: I have had several discussions with Deputy Lucier. If you go to the last page in the letter from the Chief about the ATV's. Primarily the focus would be Black Acres, and I understand that's a major issue for the Police Department and I'm sure there are other locations in the City that these could be put to good use. We are either taking cruisers into areas we really shouldn't be, or the officers are walking significant distances to get to there. I know it's late in the year but maybe if we could identify something for how we could purchase a couple of them so that coming out to springtime they are available and the officers can start training. It makes a lot of sense to me. I know you have been trying to wait on the private sector to do something, but I think it's our responsibility. They're police vehicles; they're our responsibility so I would ask Planning to identify funding sources for those and maybe if we could get them fairly quickly...I don't know. Is that a stock item, Deputy?

Deputy Chief Simmons stated there's a variety of them they're looking at. Some I believe would be a stock item, yes.

Alderman O'Neil asked so if there was a funding source available and we could get them sooner than later, you could put them to use this fall?

Deputy Chief Simmons responded I believe so, yes.

Alderman O'Neil stated okay, so if we could do that. The other thing is, and I think all of you live this, and that's the issue of speed in the Wards. I want to compliment the Department. They had some great support last week with the

State Police coming in to help them. I understand they wrote a whole lot of tickets.

Deputy Chief Simmons stated yes. I don't have the exact number. Actually, it was higher than the first time.

Alderman O'Neil stated my personal opinion...the traffic counters. We have gotten our money's worth out of them. I think we should...There's some new technology out there. You're not 100% sure it's tested yet, so that you want to invest in a number of them. Am I correct?

Deputy Chief Simmons stated yes. Actually, there's new technology out there. The old traffic counters we use are the ones with the cable across the road. Those get wear and tear. Obviously people see that they're there. There's a new one out there that's run off of radar. We've actually tested one. I believe we're going to test another one and get a report back and determine which way to go with those.

Alderman O'Neil stated but I think that's something that is a great tool for them when they get a request from an Alderman on the Mayor's office to take a look at a particular street. They put it out there. They get a history of the street, and then the officer goes up to do enforcement at the most opportune time, where they're going to get the most amount of traffic that is speeding. Then we're not wasting...I shouldn't say 'wasting,' but officers do go out on streets trying to catch speeders, and it's just the wrong time of the day. So I think that's something...That, to me, might be the highest priority. The public does react to these speed trailers. They see them on the street and it does bring them to recognize what the speed is on their street, so I think both those items, to me, that's the highest priority and we should look to purchase those absolutely as soon as possible. I'd ask maybe by the next meeting that the...Let me back up. I would suggest that if the Planning Department can identify some funds, that we possibly do that and present to the full Board meeting in October, if at all possible.

Alderman Duval stated just a comment to back up what Alderman O'Neil is referring to on the speed counters. I know I've been in meetings with Lieutenant Hopkins relating to the speed issues up at the cut-through streets, upper Bridge Street, upper Hanover Street. He's been good about providing us with information on new equipment, so I'm sure that you'll be communicating with him and trying to respond to some of those needs.

Deputy Chief Simmons stated they recently had a vender in, looking at one of the products and I believe there is another one they're going to be looking at as well.

Chairman Garrity asked Deputy Simmons, for the radio situation. Would like a Homeland Security grant cover something like that?

Deputy Chief Simmons responded no, it would not. Homeland Security identifies radios for interoperability only. Those are the ones that can communicate with other agencies. That's a VHF system. We recently just installed those in our cruisers through money we received through Homeland through the State. That was like \$225,000. That's a second radio. It's not the proper radio to use in the City, based on the density of the population. I think I tried to explain that last time. It's like an AM-FM system.

Chairman Garrity stated right. I remember the conversation.

Alderman Gatsas stated I noticed that the item that started this discussion, the police canines, is the last item on the list. It shocks me that it would go there and the two dogs that would get us up to at least a full complement is not there. The other thing that I find that there's nothing on here for are those decimal meters to control sound. My understanding is that the Department has two, but that neither one of them is calibrated and they don't work. Is that true?

Deputy Chief Simmons responded that is true.

Alderman Gatsas asked is there a reason why they're not on this list?

Deputy Chief Simmons responded I cannot answer that. I can tell you, as you look at that list, when we put it together, although we tried to in sequence put a priority on what we needed, we also tried not to overly identify what was number...other than the top five or top four. We tried to add things, I believe canines, as mentioned. Although it's listed at the bottom, that doesn't necessarily mean it's one of our least concerns. It certainly is a concern of ours. And I think we tried to explain that in the placement order we put them on the paper work. As far as the decibel meters go, I can tell you that was probably overlooked, as far as what we were looking for in this list.

Alderman Gatsas asked but if you have such a serious problem with noise and motorcycles and mufflers, I guess the next question is how many summons have we given out for noise?

Deputy Chief Simmons responded I can get you that number. I don't have it with me tonight. We've given out a number of those. Most of them are as a result of equipment violations versus a decibel issue. The effectiveness of using the meters is a little more difficult to enforce because of the criteria you have to use to measure the sound of a motorcycle or the sound of...with that decibel meter, it's

got to be...There's a lot of criteria you have to follow. Most of the violations we've been issuing are as a result of people modifying their exhausts, with taking out the baffle systems, which are required. I can get you that number.

Alderman Gatsas stated but that doesn't help the situation of people complaining about noise and not having the equipment to do it.

Deputy Chief Simmons stated I wouldn't disagree with that. I wouldn't suggest to you that we don't want decibel meters. It just didn't make this particular list.

Alderman Gatsas asked and there are no other state grants or federal grants that will assist you in the radios?

Deputy Chief Simmons stated no.

Alderman Gatsas asked somebody has made that call to the Department of Safety?

Deputy Chief Simmons responded we've spoken with the Department of Safety and Homeland Security, and all the research and areas we looked into all dealt with interoperability only.

Alderman Gatsas asked the Department of Justice?

Deputy Chief Simmons responded there's nothing out there that we're aware of, Alderman.

Alderman O'Neil stated Deputy, I think it was earlier this year, you had an opportunity to send some officers to school for canines. There was a particular school coming up, and we appropriated about \$56,000. Regarding the canines and the fact that you're still short, is there anything we would need to act on soon? Is there a school over the winter that you're aware of?

Deputy Chief Simmons stated we actually had discussion on this yesterday, as a matter of fact. We're still entertaining the idea of holding our own school. If we don't feel we can conduct our own school, our plan at this point would probably be to hook up with Boston police and send officers out there.

Alderman O'Neil asked do you happen to know...do you have a time frame for if you're in your own school or if you send them to Boston, when that might be? I guess where I'm going with this, Gary, is do we need to start identifying some money immediately or do we have a little time?

Deputy Chief Simmons stated I think we have a little time. We're actually looking to see when Boston is going to hold their next school, and we're still toying with the idea of running our own. As we discussed in a previous meeting, the need to fill those two spots is important to us. We're certainly in a position now that we have enough canines out there now that we're not in a position of being overly concerned, I guess, at this point.

Alderman Osborne stated you mentioned, Deputy, that you had two decibel meters and they're not calibrated. Is that what you said?

Deputy Chief Simmons stated I don't believe they're calibrated. They've had some issues with getting them to operate correctly. I don't have the particulars. I can certainly get those and forward a note to the Board.

Alderman Osborne stated I'm still in the dark. What did we get them for?

Deputy Chief Simmons stated I believe we purchased them initially for noise issues, back several years ago. I do know that it's very difficult to utilize them. It involves the use of triangles and a certain difference away from the muffler, certain RPM's etc. But again, I could get you a better answer for this. I don't have that here.

Alderman Osborne asked so the amount of decibels has to be tightened up. In other words, you can't use these meters in other words, if you pull over a motorcycle, let's say, and he's sitting there and the motorcycle is running with this decibel meter next to it, you can't judge it that way. It has to be reved up.

Deputy Chief Simmons stated it's not as simple as just going over there with a decibel meter. That's correct, Alderman. It requires being a certain distance from the motorcycle at a certain angle, at a certain decibel reading. It's my understanding that some of the motorcycles do not have tachometers, so you have to have a tachometer available. That's my understanding. If I'm incorrect, that's the way I understood it from when I was in the Traffic Division for several years to come. If that has changed I will certainly let you know as soon as I can.

Alderman Osborne asked so the only thing you can go by now is the change in the stock muffler, as compared to ..

Deputy Chief Simmons responded it is not even a change in the stock muffler because the laws changed several years ago to allow for a modified exhaust. What has happened is we look at motorcycles where, most of the motorcycles are loud noise are the result of baffles being removed from the inside of the muffler. That's what we look at.

Alderman Lopez stated what I would recommend to the committee is that since the radios are priority that the Police Department take it out of their budget, we've done this in the pass when it came to overtime. In April 2008 the Finance Officer will review the revenue and expenditures of all the departments and at that time money could be transferred from other departments to that department if there is going to be a surplus in other departments. I must remind the committee that there is \$500,000 in the contingency, \$700,000 in the salary adjustment account, and they were funded for 225 police officers, I don't believe we have 225 police officers, I know you are working on it, if you get them I think we will find them. I have no question in my mind, but I think to hold up the radios I would recommend the committee authorize them to go ahead and purchase them, they don't have to pay for them right now, they can get them on order, and they have money if they have to put a down payment or whatever the case may be and move this thing right along and also take care of the other two items the ATV and the speed counter and if they are short at the end of the year we can take money out of the contingency fund and the Mayor has his salary adjustment account of \$700,000.

Alderman O'Neil stated I think we need to come up with something soon. Alderman Lopez has laid out a number of options for us, I don't know that we need to reach a conclusion tonight, but I think what we need to do out of this committee is send to the full Board that the radios is an absolute priority and it needs to be take care of. The last thing we need is a radio to fail an officer in a very serious situation. This can't go on till next spring. I think Alderman Lopez has thrown out a number of options, this is significant investment, \$175,000. I am not going to sit here tonight and say one fund is better fund to do it, but maybe the mayor working with Mr. MacKenzie and Mr. Sanders can make a recommendation to us at the full Board meeting the first of October. I'M concerned about this and some reason we didn't ask the right questions, and maybe the department didn't talk enough about it, but there was a miscommunication in the spring during the budget cause I believe we would have addressed this. But I do think it needs to be addressed. In my discussions with the Chief and Deputy Lussier, the ATV's, these are smaller numbers and I think we could find the money for these very easily, they could be put to good use in enforcement off road. I think every alderman on this Board, including the two At-Large, get complaints about the speed and I think the traffic counters and speed trailer would be put to good use, they'd be put to good use tonight if they were available.

Alderman O'Neil moved to ask the Mayor, Mr. MacKenzie and Mr. Sanders to meet to make a recommendation to us on the radios for the first of October. Alderman Duval seconded the motion.

Alderman Gatsas asked if there was any possibility of discounts for a larger purchase than 50 because I certainly don't want to be the person that's going to allocate the 50 radios and have the 52nd person have a bad one and be in a life threatening situation and not have a radio.

Deputy Simmons responded I don't know what number we would have to buy to get one, I certainly could get that to the committee for the next meeting. I'm not aware of them mentioning a discount if we bought in bulk, however if that is a possibility I don't want to say it's not at this point.

Alderman Gatsas stated if we are going to do it we mind as well buy 200 radios and be done with it.

Chairman Garrity asked that Deputy Simmons provide that information to Mr. MacKenzie, and Mayor Guinta before the meeting.

Alderman Osborne stated 50 radios, so we are talking a five year period.

Deputy Simmons responded correct.

Alderman Osborne asked about the rest of the radios, are they going to fail or do they think they are going to last another four years.

Deputy Simmons stated that Alderman Gatsas was talking about purchasing 200, that would leave only 50.

Alderman Osborne stated if we only get 50 are the other 200 going to be okay to use for the next four years.

Deputy Simmons stated what are plan was if we were to start a scheduling program, we would take some of the older 50 radios that were being replaced and use those for parts for some of the other older radios. That would keep them up and running a little longer, so we are hoping that this scheduling program would work fine.

Chairman Garrity asked to outfit every officer with a radio including animal control and parking, what's the right number we need.

Deputy Simmons stated it would be about 240. We've replaced 20, as we've increased the complement of officers you have given us the funding to buy radios for them. We also bought four with a federal grant so we just purchased 20 in the last two years.

Chairman Garrity called for a vote. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderman O'Neil moved that Mr. MacKenzie identify funding sources for the ATV, the traffic counters and speed trailer for the meeting in October.

Chairman Garrity asked Mr. Sheppard to come forward stating he assumed the ATV's would qualify under MER.

Mr. Sheppard stated he didn't have the information with him but he would get it and work with Mr. MacKenzie on it.

10. Communication from Dennis Hebert, Director of the AmeriCorps VISTA Program submitting two estimates relating to the program's relocation to the Rines Center.

Alderman O'Neil moved for discussion. Alderman Osborne seconded the motion.

Chairman Garrity asked Mr. MacKenzie on the OYS move how did we fund that, was that through a bond balance?

Mr. MacKenzie replied no I believe the Board appropriated some contingency money, or much of it was in his budget.

Mr. Boldin did not recall the source of the funds.

Chairman Garrity stated I thought it was through the So Willow roofing project asking if it was a bondable item.

Mr. MacKenzie replied I don't remember that the OYS move was a bond balance, I don't believe it was and normally this type of equipment would not be bondable unless we were rebuilding a building, and as part of that we could use a bond balance, but just by itself it would not normally be.

Alderman O'Neil stated Mr. Hebert was ready for this.

Mr. Hebert replied yes.

Alderman O'Neil stated so you don't need a lot of debate from the elected officials we just need to make a decision on how are we getting the money.

In response to questions from Alderman Garrity, Mr. Hebert advised the total number they needed a little over \$13,000.

Alderman O'Neil moved to recommend approval of the \$13,200 and ask the CIP staff to identify funds, inclusive of contingency if needed for the next full Board meeting. Alderman Osborne duly seconded the motion. There being none opposed the motion carried.

11. Communication from Else Raymond seeking the City's assistance in design of engineering plans to present to contractors regarding public land which is creating problems with water damage on her property.

Alderman Duval stated regrettably efforts to assist Ms. Raymond have basically have been unsuccessful and have concluded with the assistance of the Highway Department and Parks and Rec Department, and a couple of other departments actually that it's really a problem that pertains to her property only and it's a private matter.

Alderman Duval consequently moved to receive and file this item. Alderman O'Neil duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Osborne asked if the city had any liability on this particular case at all.

Deputy Solicitor Arnold stated he had not looked at it closely but I don't believe so.

Chairman Garrity called for a vote. There being none opposed the motion carried.

TABLED ITEM

12. Petition to discontinue a portion of So. Bedford Street.
*(Tabled 07/11/2006. On July 11, 2006, the BMA voted to refer this matter also to the Special Committee on Riverfront Activities and Baseball.
Tabled in Riverfront Committee on 11/13/2006.)*

This item remained on the table.

NEW BUSINESS

Request of Highway to transfer funds for the Cohas Phase 2 and CSO projects.

Chairman Garrity indicated he was not pleased with having new business.

Mr. Sheppard apologized to the Chair stating it was an item that we didn't realize wasn't on the agenda but realized it tonight. It was something that was somewhat urgent because it is regarding transferring of funds within a couple of our existing projects, one is for property acquisition that we need to move forward on. This should have been brought to your attention earlier and I apologize again for last minute. They had a purchase and sales on a piece of property that will expire next Tuesday or something like that.

Chairman Garrity noted that the meeting had been scheduled for a month.

Alderman O'Neil stated over the years public works and their divisions not to be a problem with getting us information, I would have liked to have it ahead of item but they have strived over the years to make sure their items are on the agenda, this obviously was a mistake and they happen.

Chairman Garrity called a recess to permit copying of documents.

Chairman Garrity called the meeting back to order.

Mr. McNeill again apologized noting it was his responsibility for not getting this item on the agenda. As you can see there is a letter dated September 7th the first four items did make the agenda, we addressed those, I'd like to address the last two items. It's really housekeeping for us and EPD, CIP 712407 we would like to transfer within the budget \$150,000 from construction contracts to land acquisition, that was required to obtain an easement for a pipeline. The second one is 71203 and that is a housekeeping one, we have \$250,000 left in that CIP we would like to transfer to 74001 which is a rather large one that we have been doing all of our CSO construction contracts under, so those two items are housekeeping internally for EPD.

Alderman O'Neil stated if this easement or the purchase of the property doesn't happen it could add another \$300,000 to the cost that is the estimate.

Mr. McNeill stated that is correct. If we bypass the easement and do the alternative route for the pipelines it's about \$300,000 difference.

Alderman O'Neil stated so this needs to happen.

Deputy Solicitor Arnold stated if I may just to be clear we are not talking about an easement, we are talking about property acquisition.

Alderman O'Neil responded correct.

On motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Osborne, it was voted to approve the request.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Duval, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee